Claims

1.   A validation system for validating an entity with whom a user intends to trade or exchange electronic information, including validation means operable to obtain status details of the entity from third party validation sources, and indicator means operable to indicate the obtained status to the user substantially in real time.

2.   A system according to claim 1, including means operable to determine the security of the communication medium between the user and the trade entity, the indicating means being operable to give an indication of the security of the communication substantially in real time.

3.   A system according to claim 1, including processing means operable to determine a trustworthiness indictor on the basis of one or more status details and/or communication security and to advise the user of the trustworthiness of the trade entity.

4.   A system according to claim 1, wherein the indicator is a visual indicator.

5.   A system according to claim 4, wherein the indicator provides a series of colour signals each indicative of a level of trustworthiness.

6.   A system for generating a secure record of a transaction or exchange of electronic information with another entity including capture means operable to capture electronic data related to a transaction between a user and a trading entity and time stamp means operable to attach timing information to the captured data.

7.   A system according to claim 6, including storage means for storing the secure record and/or printing means operable to print the secure record.

5   8.   A system according to claim 6, wherein the capture means is provided in a user computer and is operable to capture screen displays relating to the transaction.

9.   A system according to claim 6, wherein the system is able to capture data relating to the type of communication between the user and the trading entity.

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